

# MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture  
**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE**  
**MONTANA FIELD OFFICE**  
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 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION MONTH OF DECEMBER 2015

**AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY:** The month of December was mostly cold with periods of snow for the state of Montana, though there were above average temperatures toward the beginning of the month. High temperatures ranged from the lower 40s to the mid 60s and low temperatures ranged from -25 degrees to the upper single digits. Precipitation in the form of snowfall was present across the State but in variable amounts, with the highest recorded this month in Heron with 6.59 inches of moisture. Topsoil moisture conditions were 80 percent adequate to surplus which is behind last year's 84 percent. Subsoil moisture conditions are 67 percent adequate to surplus which is below last year's 82 percent. Corn harvested for grain is complete with 100 percent harvested, which is unchanged from last year but ahead of the 5-year average of 98 percent. So far winter damage to winter wheat is fairly minimal and snow coverage for the state is rated 53 percent good to excellent compared with 63 percent at this time last year. Winter wheat condition is rated 74 percent good to excellent, compared with 65 percent last year. Pasture and range conditions declined from the last report with 16 percent rated good to excellent, which remains well behind last year's 35 percent. Cold weather and snow have more producers providing supplemental feed at higher rates than the previous year with 97 percent of cattle and 98 percent of sheep being fed, compared with 90 percent and 94 percent, respectively, last year. Reporters are noting that even in areas where pastures aren't under snow cover that livestock producers are having to feed due to a lack of grass leftover from summer.

### CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Corn				
Harvested for grain .....	100	79	100	98
Cattle and calves				
Receiving supplemental feed .....	97	67	90	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Receiving supplemental feed .....	98	79	94	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

**SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION**

Commodity	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Topsoil moisture				
Very short.....	4	10	3	NA
Short.....	16	23	13	NA
Adequate.....	76	60	76	NA
Surplus.....	4	7	8	NA
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	7	12	5	NA
Short.....	26	31	13	NA
Adequate.....	63	48	71	NA
Surplus.....	4	9	11	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

**CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION**

	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Grazing Accessibility				
Open.....	24	NA	36	NA
Difficult.....	38	NA	36	NA
Closed.....	38	NA	28	NA
Pasture and Range				
Very poor.....	19	13	5	NA
Poor.....	27	27	24	NA
Fair.....	38	40	36	NA
Good.....	14	19	31	NA
Excellent.....	2	1	4	NA
Winter Wheat				
Very poor.....	--	--	--	NA
Poor.....	2	2	3	NA
Fair.....	24	25	32	NA
Good.....	60	57	56	NA
Excellent.....	14	16	9	NA
Winter Wheat – Wind Damage				
None.....	91	NA	86	NA
Light.....	8	NA	9	NA
Moderate.....	1	NA	3	NA
Heavy.....	--	NA	2	NA
Winter Wheat – Freeze & Drought Damage				
None.....	88	NA	85	NA
Light.....	10	NA	13	NA
Moderate.....	2	NA	2	NA
Heavy.....	--	NA	--	NA
Winter Wheat – Protectiveness of Snow Cover				
Very Poor.....	6	NA	5	NA
Poor.....	13	NA	11	NA
Fair.....	28	NA	21	NA
Good.....	35	NA	47	NA
Excellent.....	18	NA	16	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

Montana’s weather data can be accessed at the following:

[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Montana/Publications/Crop\\_Progress\\_&\\_Condition/2015/MT\\_Weather\\_01032016.pdf](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Montana/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/2015/MT_Weather_01032016.pdf)